

DOT DMS Docket Number FMCSA-2004-18898<sup>23</sup> and  
FMCSA-1998-3639-38

FMCSA public opinion meeting at 9:00 AM, OCT. 26, 2004 at the Sheraton Hotel in Springfield, MA

THE ISSUE IS: How to better utilize the information that the FMCSA gathers from their inspections!

1. Maybe the FMCSA INSPECTORS SHOULD BE REQUIRED IN THEIR TRAINING TO BE A PASSENGER IN A CDL VEHICLE BOTH TRUCKS AND BUSES TO GET THE PERSPECTIVE VIEW FROM ALL ANGLES. This might also give the INSPECTORS A BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT REALLY HAPPENS IN THE CDL's regular dispatch.

2. The FMCSA could use a hotline from drivers, as long as the FMCSA does not let the carrier know who gave them a tip, since carriers have blackballed employees for many years. Some carriers force drivers into non-compliant driving. If the driver does not do what some carriers want them to do dishonestly, the driver is fired or not given freight. This is one of the reasons for big driver turnover at many companies. Many drivers do not make the big money many carriers claim they pay.

FMCSA should be made aware, if they are not already aware, of the unscrupulous acts of some carriers, such as charging the driver and deducting it from the paycheck if he/she goes off the carrier's set route. What choice does a driver have if the re-routing is because of construction, an accident, or other circumstances beyond the driver's control and the driver is still expected to make his delivery on time? There are also other fees made up by the carrier, which can be substantial amounts; such as a fee for late delivery by the driver who is held up in route to delivery by an accident or other unforeseen circumstances. Do the FMCSA RECORDS look at the financial aspects of a carrier's treatment of drivers? How a driver is treated as an employee can have a big effect on safety if looked at the correct agenda. Foreign investors invest their money into American run carriers and when these investors back out, the carriers file bankruptcy and leave not only the drivers without a paycheck, but also do not do repairs on equipment before going into bankruptcy, which can affect the safety issue.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES TO THE FMCSA:

There are too many laws in effect from ALL the STATES and a driver is expected to know ALL these laws. It is almost impossible for the drivers to be compliant in ALL the states all the time. THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE UNIFORMED LAWS REGARDING INTERSTATE TRAFFIC, not the piece meal bits we are expected to deal with already. There, also, needs to be more education to teach new CDL DRIVERS AND VETERAN DRIVERS OF EXISTING OR CHANGING LAWS. One must almost be an attorney to drive truck.

THERE IS NOT ENOUGH EDUCATION ABOUT TRUCK AND BUS TRAFFIC TO THE PUBLIC. The drivers are treated with disrespect and with

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aggressive action against them many times causing near misses. We need more education spread through the new driver handbooks about commercial vehicles and how to drive around them and understand what the CDL drivers have to deal with in their job.

THERE IS NOT ENOUGH PARKING AND MANY TRUCKSTOPS ARE CHARGING FOR PARKING SPACES, MAKING IT WORSE FOR THE DRIVERS TO BE LOGBOOK COMPLIANT.

The new 14 hour logbook could work if LINE 2 WOULD ALLOW FOR THREE SLEEP BREAKS rather than two. The existing two split law creates a problem with time stamps, deliveries, and pickup schedules. Being able to split the 10 hours 3 times would make the 10 hour rule more versatile and usable between schedules and time stamps. Some carriers are not taking the log hours seriously, since one carrier told a driver that the logbook is a moot subject.

LINE 1 would work better for eating and showers and motels. Using meal time on Line 4 makes it very tight and unrealistic to make deliveries, etc.. Using Line 1 and 2 against our 14 hours is making drivers more rushed and less rested and more difficult to be compliant.

SOMEONE NEEDS TO MAKE THE PUBLIC AWARE that the side mirrors on their vehicles should NOT be used to distinguish distance when passing a bus or truck. The public pulls into the right lane too quickly not leaving enough distance for the CDL driver's vehicle.

We'd like to thank you for this opportunity for feedback.

Sincerely,

*Harry P Hatch*  
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Harry & Virginia Hatch

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